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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Wednesday, May 11, 1932.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Vitamin D." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

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Today we're going to have a talk about still another vitamin. If you've been listening in on Wednesdays, you'll remember that we've already discussed three vitamins--A,B, and C. So today it's time for the fourth one-- vitamin D, which, by the way, happens to be a very prominent member of the vitamin family. In fact, I believe it's probably the best known of all these interesting food substances.

You may think of vitamin D as the sunshine substitute. Or you may know it as the antirachitic vitamin or the special aid to bone and tooth development. If you are a parent, of course, you've heard and read how this vitamin prevents rickets in children. Plenty of reasons, you see, why it has had a good deal of publicity since it was discovered.

Why is this vitamin so essential to good bone tissue? Because, the scientists explain, it helps to utilize in the body the two principal bone-building materials--calcium and phosphorus. No need to go into all the technical whys and wherefores. I never was much on long scientific explanations anyway, you know. The important fact, it seems to me is that after years of research and experimentation, scientists have proved that this vitamin controls bone development because it somehow promotes the assimilation of the calcium and phosphorus we take in our foods and these are the two minerals which build bone.

If your bones are straight and strong, and if your teeth are sound and regular, you've had your vitamin D, whether intentionally or not. And you still need some of it to keep your bones and teeth healthy. But it is in the feeding of babies and young children that this vitamin is so very important.

And how shall we get vitamin D? First, through sunlight, especially summer sunlight, for it is at that season when the ultra-violet rays are most abundant. Sunlight shining on the skin helps to produce vitamin D in

the body. So sunbaths, you see, aren't just a fad. As for the foods that contain this vitamin, cod liver oil takes first place. You notice that I call this oil a food. It deserves to be considered so, and not thought of as a medicine. Sun baths in summer and daily rations of cod liver oil in winter are just as surely aids to good nutrition and good health as are carefully planned diets. Since vitamin D isn't plentiful in most of our common foods, and since children especially need an abundance of it, they should have cod liver oil when sunshine isn't adequate. Even milk, so valuable for most of the needs of the growing child, may be a very poor source of vitamin D. That's why young babies, who depend so largely on milk for their nourishment, are safer with both cod liver oil and sunlight. This holds true for all children up to the age of about two years.

Well then, as I said, cod liver oil is the food containing the most generous supply of vitamin D. It occurs also in the yolk of eggs, butter, milk, salmon, oysters, California sardines.

Recent experiments show that other fish beside cod may be rich in this vitamin. The next time you open a can of salmon or sardines for the family, remember that these good foods supply this helpful vitamin. Dr. Tolle of the nutrition laboratory at the Bureau of Fisheries has found that the best canned salmon -- that is, the chinook or king salmon -- contains much vitamin D. Cheaper grades of canned salmon also contain some of it.

Not all kinds of sardines have been tested yet but certain kinds, notably California sardines, furnish a good supply. These, however, are not so rich in the vitamin as salmon.

A good many foods may be enriched in vitamin D by irradiation by ultra-violet light. This brings up a characteristic of this vitamin which makes it unique. It can be produced both in foods and in the body by artificial means. This is because many food materials contain a chemical compound known as ergosterol. This compound is changed into vitamin D when it is exposed to the ultra rays of sunlight or of an ultra-violet lamp. The human skin contains ergosterol too, and this, it is believed, is the reason why baths in summer sunlight are so effective in promoting bone growth and preventing rickets in children.

As for the question of vitamin D in milk, - milk may or may not be a good source. That all depends upon what the cow eats and whether she has lots of good sunshine. The vitamin appears in the milk of cows that feed in sunny pastures or on prepared or irradiated food. Milk, too, either fresh or dried, may be irradiated to increase its vitamin D content. Except under these special circumstances, milk cannot be depended upon as the only source of vitamin D in the diet, though of course it will furnish some and also the necessary calcium and phosphorus for bone and tooth growth.

Expectant mothers and mothers who are nursing their babies must remember the importance of having plenty of vitamin D and sunshine for the proper nourishment of the baby both before and after birth. Mothers on a vitamin-rich diet impart vitamins to their milk.

Well, there are some of the answers to your questions about vitamin D. Next week we'll take up the fifth vitamin, vitamin E. But in the meantime, aren't you getting hungry? Isn't it time we made plans for our next dinner?

I asked the Menu Specialist for a vitamin D dinner. So she decided on salmon for the main dish - salmon and potato puff. With it serve buttered peas--either the fresh, new green ones or canned. Then, salad made with grated raw carrot and diced celery on crisp lettuce. Boiled dressing would be excellent with this salad. For dessert, Apple brown betty with cream or sauce.

I'll repeat that menu and then give you the recipe for salmon and potato puff. Salmon and potato puff; Buttered peas; Grated carrot and diced celery salad; and, Apple brown betty with cream or sauce.

Now that main dish. I'd better warn you in advance that this is a long recipe and requires a pencil with a good stout point.

Are you ready to take down the ingredients first? There are ten of them.

2 cups or 1 pound of salmon
2 tablespoons of butter
2 tablespoons of chopped celery
2 tablespoons of chopped parsley
2 cups of seasoned mashed potatoes
3 eggs
1 teaspoon of salt
1 teaspoon of minced onion
1 tablespoon of lemon juice
A few drops of tabasco sauce.

There. Did you get all those? I'll repeat that list of ten. (Repeat.)

Drain the fish, flake it with a fork and remove all bones. Melt the fat and cook the celery and parsley in it for a few minutes. Then combine with the salmon, mashed potatoes and seasonings. Add the beaten egg yolks. And beat the mixture until very light. Fold in the well-beaten whites of eggs. Pile the mixture lightly at once into a greased baking dish. Bake in a moderate over (350 degrees) for 1 hour--or until set in the center and lightly browned. Serve in the dish.

You can also prepare this puff in individual servings. Bake it in ramekins or custard cups. Then it will be especially light, fluffy and attractive for serving as a luncheon dish.